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FLOOR DEBATE

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people will have is the budget. Where is the money going to come from to do this? I don't have a program in mind to cut in order to make room for this. I'm proposing that in the ever shrinking winner's circle of programs that will get whatever dollars we have left, this be one of them. I want to shove master teacher into that winner circle, and hope that it can survive the process. It's...this is not an attempt to do an end run around LB 305. I take exception to Senator Chambers' statement; I think he mentioned me and some others who have a narrow agenda. My agenda is as broad as all education. I've had conversations with Senator Chambers, with the Governor, with everybody involved, to try to find a way to reach an accommodation on teacher pay and on expanded financing for the public schools. So I take exception to the contention that this is a narrow-minded proposal. This would apply to all teachers. I want to do as much as we can. I want LB 305 to succeed, if we can find enough common ground to make it succeed. But in the meantime, as in the case with loan forgiveness, I think we also should do what we've already promised to do. We should honor this commitment we've already made to reward teachers who achieve master teacher certification. The program was enacted last year; it's time that we fund it. I urge my colleagues to vote for this amendment and to keep this promise that we have made to Nebraska's teachers. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD PRESIDING

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Maxwell. Senator Wehrbein, on AM1721 to LB 543.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Mr. President, members of the body, I'm just going to reiterate what this does. It adds another \$750,000, which basically comes out of the A fund allocation. I just want the body to know. I'm not sure what the will of the body is, or even what I want to do on the master teacher program. I tend to understand that it...if LB 305 would not pass, perhaps this is something we should do. I don't know where the master teacher program stands in the priority of importance. It is true we have not funded it. One of the reasons it was not funded in our committee is there was no request to fund it. Which, believe it or not, that's kind of crucial to our process. If